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ABSTRACT

The present high school graduation rate for migrant students is approximately 50%, as compared to the 90% dropout rate of 20 years ago. Migrant Education's success has encouraged recent changes in funding to extend services to those youths between 17 and 21 who have not graduated. Attempts to draw dropout youths back to regular or alternative schools must take into account the reasons the students had for dropping out. Three leading indicators of students at high risk of dropping out are: (1) they are old for their age group; (2) they show poor academic achievement; and (3) they have low socio-economic status. Economic and cultural pressures not only increase the students' chances for leaving early, but also increase the difficulties of luring them back. This report presents summaries of interviews of 13 experienced migrant educators conducted by staff of the Migrant Education Secondary Assistance (MESA) project. The educators presented ideas for administrative and educational practices that could be effective in increasing the number of dropouts returning to educational programs, including: (1) the work study concept; (2) flexible scheduling; (3) the dropout prevention specialist or advisor role; (4) community involvement; (5) role models; (6) parent involvement; and (7) a pre-General Educational Development Test (GED) program. (ALL)

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DROPOUT RETRIEVAL REPORT:

THOUGHTS ON DROPOUT PREVENTION AND RETRIEVAL

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DROPOUT RETRIEVAL REPORT:

THOUGHTS ON DROPOUT PREVENTION AND RETRIEVAL

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1989

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PREFACE

This report is two-fold, including both an introductory section on "Thoughts On Dropout Prevention and Retrieval" and summaries of interviews conducted by Migrant Education Secondary Assistance (MESA) staff. Between September 1988 and March 1989, MESA staff interviewed thirteen migrant educators for their insights on dropout retrieval and migrant secondary program improvements and recommendations. The interviewees were selected based on their wide-ranging experiences in migrant education in diverse geographic areas.

MESA staff gratefully acknowledge the interviewees for sharing their thoughts. Their years of cumulative experience give us valuable insight into ways of reaching migrant dropouts. MESA staff interviewed the following migrant educators:

RAMON BACA, Migrant Counselor, Kalamazoo, Michigan.
BRIGITA BAROBS, HEP Recruiter, Tampa, Florida.
ANNE BARRY, Project STAY Director, Immokalee, Florida.
JUDY DELVECCHIO, G.R.A.S.P. Coordinator, East Bloomfield, New York.
JUAN GARCIA, HEP Director, El Rito, New Mexico.
SISTER JOAN HOOLAHAN, Program Supervisor of the School-Based Youth Services Program, Henry D. Young Vocational Center at the Youth Mall, Salem, New Jersey.
ROBERT LEVY, ESCORT Director, Oneonta, New York.
FRANK LUDOVINA, Coordinator of Migrant Education Region 9, San Diego, California.
GERARDO MARTINEZ, HEP Director, Bethesda, Maryland.
CLEM MILLER, Project Director for Migrant Education Community Services at the Redlands Christian Migrant Association, Ruskin, Florida.
PERFECTO MUNOZ, HEP Director, Stockton, California.
MERCED NATERA, Migrant Program Director and Counselor, Arvin, California.
ANNE STADLER, Coordinator and Director of Yuma Union High School District's Migrant Education Program, Yuma, Arizona.

The bulk of this report was prepared by Ms. Anne Salerno and Ms. Mary Fink, Migrant Education Specialists with the MESA Project. Both individuals are "dropout experts" themselves. Prior to assuming her present position with MESA, Anne taught adult education (ABE, ESL, GED) in the BOCES Geneseo Migrant Center's In-Camp Learning Program. As an in-camp instructor she was personally confronted with the high dropout rate and enrolled many of the youth in her classes. Mary has communicated wih hundreds of dropout youth as the Resource Specialist for the Migrant Dropout Reconnection Program (MDRP). She has, also, been the editor of REAL TALK, a bilingual newsletter for migrant dropout youth for the past four years.

Robert Lynch, Director
BOCES Geneseo Migrant Center

OVERVIEW: THOUGHTS ON DROPOUT PREVENTION AND RETRIEVAL

In the twenty-fourth year of Migrant Education, educators take justifiable pride in the gains made in numbers of migrant students completing high school. Earlier estimates of a 90% dropout rate among migratory students have been replaced with more favorable ones of close to a 50% graduation rate.[1] Migrant Education's success has encouraged recent changes in funding to extend services to those youth between 17 and 21 who have not graduated. This report presents the views of thirteen experienced migrant educators through summaries of interviews conducted by staff of the Migrant Education Secondary Assistance (MESA) project. Educators were encouraged to present ideas for administrative and educational practices that could be effective in increasing numbers of migrant youth returning to regular or alternative educational programs and did so. They also were interested in dropout prevention and had many thoughts for improving the school environment so that students would not drop out.

Interest in retrieving the dropout student has been increasing in recent years. Interest has by no means, however, spread to all the nation's school districts. The statement in a report produced in 1987 for the New York State School Boards Association, "...there is reason to suspect that too many school districts view school leavers, once left, as a lost cause," perhaps represents attitudes shared by all too many.[2]

Many studies have analyzed the reasons students leave school before graduation. Attempts to draw these same youth back to a regular or alternative school must take into account the many valid reasons the students had for dropping out. Harold Hodgkinson in All One System says that youth that drop out often "...perceive themselves accurately as failures in the school culture and are usually very alienated from school."[3] The Grade Retention and Promotion (GRAPE) study noted that experts agree that the three leading indicators of students at high risk of dropping out 1) are old for their age group 2) show poor academic achievement and 3) have low socio-economic status.[4] Youth who find themselves in the situation of being less successful and older than students of their own grade level will have to be shown good reasons for getting back into what would seem to them to be a discouraging environment. As migrant educators well know, economic and cultural pressures not only increase the students' chances for leaving early but also increase the difficulties of luring them back.

Robert Levy, one of the educators interviewed, taking note of the fact that many dropouts have found school unpleasant, believes that educators must be sensitive to the youth's needs for a "cooling off period" before a return to any sort of educational program. Levy says that the length of such a period is uncertain, varying from one youth to another, but that those

seeking to enroll the youth must allow openings for them to enter programs when ready.

WORK/STUDY CONCEPT

Many of the educators interviewed mentioned the need for a work/study concept, useful not only for helping to prevent dropping out but also for luring students back who have left for economic reasons. Juan Garcia suggests that on a national level students, particularly married students and ones with families, need subsistence allowances during training. Too Late To Patch, a publication of the Hispanic Policy Development Project, echoes Garcia's thoughts. "In devising programs to address the needs of Hispanic dropouts and their families and communities, it is necessary to keep one fact firmly in mind: virtually all of them require income. Programs that offer stipends, or earn-while-you-learn programs, are more successful in reaching and retaining dropouts than are those that encompass only training and education components."[5] Students in the Immokalee (Florida) High School STAY program are linked with after-school jobs in the non-profit sector of the community to ease the economic pressure that has forced migrant students to drop out in the past.

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING

The need for flexible scheduling to encourage the completion of studies was mentioned in a number of interviews. Many of the migratory students are pressured to leave school early in the spring, return late in the fall and work during the usual school hours. Sr. Joan Hoolahan envisions a national year-around, clock-around schooling system, helpful to not only migrant students but to all in an increasingly mobile society. To make their High School Equivalency Program (HEP) available to more students, the San Joaquin Delta HEP staff has expanded its concept by both site and time. HEP is now available on both the San Joaquin Delta College campus and at selected migrant camp sites during evening hours.

DROPOUT PREVENTION SPECIALIST/DROPOUT ADVISOR ROLE

Robert Apicella, Coordinator of the Migrant Programs at SUNY-Oneonta, spoke about the need for school district support in dropout prevention.[6] He recommends that each district have a dropout prevention specialist who is knowledgeable about the characteristics and predictors of at-risk students. The specialist should organize an action plan, train other staff, and develop advocacy strategies to involve a team approach. Apicella feels that student needs assessments and profiles beginning at kindergarten or earlier are essential to determine which students are at-risk. This system of early intervention and identification can lead to improvements in the graduation rate.

A dropout advisor is a ready staff addition to help meet the needs of this difficult-to-serve population. In the Yuma Union High School District's Migrant Education summer program, a dropout advisor works with a liaison to link youth with appropriate means of continuing their secondary education.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Many migrants feel socially and culturally isolated and uninvolved with the communities they work in during the season. A work/study program that is a joint effort between the school and the community can smoothe the transition. Besides the economic benefits to the student, the work/study program can help dispel stereotypical reactions in communities which are not experienced in hiring minorities, as Frank Ludovina has mentioned in his interview. With the self-esteem gained from the responsibilities of a new job, students perform very well and can change the community's attitudes toward the positive.

Merced Natera notes in her interview that good community relations promote job links. She also views recreation as a needed outlet for dropouts that can be provided by the community. Local churches have been actively involved in teaching a folkloric dance class to young people in her area.

Another link with the community is a partnership between business and the schools themselves. Rich's Academy of Atlanta, Georgia, for example, is a collaborative effort between Rich's Department Store and Atlanta Public Schools to serve dropouts and at-risk youth. Rich's donates the sixth floor for the Academy and the school system provides teachers and materials.

ROLE MODELS

Positive role models, particularly minorities, are important to any student's social and intellectual development. A recent publication cites the Educational Testing Service's prediction that within ten years "minority teaching forces will be less than 5 percent, compared to 12 percent in 1980."[7] Greater recruiting efforts to attract minorities into the teaching profession will be necessary to keep up with the estimated one in three students in the United States who will be from minority groups by the year 2000.[8]

One particular method of presenting minority role models has accomplished positive results. Migrant educators have mentioned the highly successful interstate Goals for Youth Program as an effective dropout prevention strategy with migrant youth. Students meet with professional athletes in weekly individual counseling sessions for about twelve weeks to set and achieve attainable goals. Players as counselor-role models inspire and support migrant students' ability to apply the program model to their own personal goals. An additional aspect of the program is that migrant youth increase self-esteem while

taking part in school or community activities.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

More active parent involvement is cited in the literature and by migrant educators as a major area of need. When parents take an active interest in education they are in effect exemplifying positive role models. Even though many migrant parents lack the skills or the educational background to help their children with their studies, they nevertheless emphasize the value of education and encourage them to graduate high school.

At the New York Migrant Education Conference in October of 1988, a migrant youth panel discussion kept coming back to the important role the family plays in a student's success.[9] An approach that serves the "whole" family's educational, social, and cultural needs is the most effective. Programs that address the strong family bonds, traditions, and cultural heritage and work along with them will have greater success than those that downplay or ignore cultural values. A child must be viewed within the context of his/her home and family and not in the isolation of a classroom setting.

At the pre-school level, the early intervention program Even Start, incorporates early childhood and parent education. Merced Natera noted in her interview the ease in reaching parents of young school-age children compared to the difficulty with involving parents of high school students.

Family literacy projects, such as the VISTA model, Literacy for Migrant Farmworkers, which operates in New York State, provide the groundwork in total family involvement. The Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project which is headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky and has four sites in North Carolina, is designed to aid undereducated adults and their three- and four-year-old children overcome poverty and illiteracy through early childhood and parent education. In-camp learning programs that address migrant literacy, English as a Second Language, and survival skills are means of providing needed education to dropout youth and adults.

PRE-G.E.D. PROGRAM

A number of migrant educators have expressed concern and frustration at not being able to serve students effectively whose reading levels are very low. Students in the High School Equivalency Programs should have at least a sixth-seventh grade reading level to achieve a G.E.D.. The G.E.D. home-study course, G.R.A.S.P. (Giving Rural Adults A Study Program) is most successful with students on a higher reading level, also. Referrals to Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) tutors and other literacy programs can provide assistance. However, an alternative program that offers readiness skills for the High

School Equivalency Program and other G.E.D. programs is desperately needed.

Between September 1988 and March 1989, Migrant Education Secondary Assistance (MESA) staff interviewed thirteen migrant educators asking for their experience and thoughts on dropout retrieval as well as other insights on migrant education. Following are summaries of those interviews.

Interview with RAMÓN BACA
Migrant Counselor, Kalamazoo, Michigan

Ramón began teaching in Michigan in 1974. For two years, he taught in a bilingual split classroom where half of the children were Spanish-speakers and some were migrants. From 1976 to the present, he has worked with migrants in the Kalamazoo school district. He has taught all grade levels as both a teacher and a tutor. He worked in a junior high resource room for migrants for two years. The last couple of years, Ramón has done group counseling and home visits for students in grades 4-12 who are bilingual and/or migrant. He noted that 90% of those students are migrant. Ramón is also the principal of the summer school.

Follow-Up

Ramón works with a female counselor in a team approach to evening home visits which has been a successful component of the migrant program. He would like to see more funding available for dropout intervention. Ramón cited links with HEP programs and community colleges as other effective components. He mentioned that the energy he and other staff generated in following up with eight or nine dropouts eventually led to their GED and enrollment in a community college. He would like to have the funding to hire a person with a master's degree in social work to do the recruitment and dropout retrieval. He does not feel that home-school liaisons are as qualified to do the recruitment.

Community Resource

Ramón also felt that there is good community cooperation. In an urban setting like Kalamazoo, there are many potential resources. Ramón said that Youth Opportunities Unlimited, a JTPA project, has been a successful program.

Summer

During the summer program, ten migrant youth are provided jobs. There are bilingual programs in all grade levels; two high school bilingual staff teach ESL and study skills. Students have P.A.S.S. coursework. There was a staff person in charge of running the P.A.S.S. program last year, but the person

did not return this year. Ramón has been taking care of that.

Need for Recreational Activities and Counseling

He would also like to hire a staff person to work a short time in the school and the bulk of the time in the evenings in homes to make connections for students with local programs, YMCAs and other recreational facilities, and hobby-oriented activities. Ramón mentioned that many migrants feel culturally isolated, bored or depressed. Mental health is a priority that he feels should be addressed from kindergarten. Counseling is imperative to counteract some of the negative experiences students receive from teachers. There is a need for more counseling group sessions. Ramón said that a school psychologist works with the Migrant Education team to identify students with special needs, and do testing.

Staff Flexibility and Training

Ramón believes staff need freedom and flexibility to work in the community with all appropriate agencies. He would like to see more inservices locally that address migrant issues and concerns such as a regional training session for a core of presenters. He would like to have all staff mandated to go to the national conference on Migrant Education. There is also a need to make staff more culturally sensitive.

Parent Involvement

Ramón said that there are Parent Advisory Councils who hold meetings, but there is not good involvement. Many parents are timid and reluctant to face the system. The Bilingual/Migrant Education program brings in good information through the Red Cross' nutrition and babysitting workshops. Ramon feels that parents need to become advocates for themselves and their children.

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September 29, 1988

Interview with BRIGITA BAROBS
HEP Recruiter, Tampa, Florida

Brigita worked on the Minnesota Migrant Council as an emergency service provider and vocational/educational program recruiter in the 1984 summer program. She moved to Florida in 1985 and worked at the Redlands Christian Migrant Association for 2 1/2 years on an after-school dropout prevention program for grades 6-8 and on an early intervention program for grades K-5. She also worked at the Summer Institute at the University of South Florida in Tampa. She is presently a recruiter for the HEP program at the same location.

Early Intervention

Brigita feels that her experience in both migrant dropout prevention and retrieval has given her good perspective on the whole Migrant Education situation. She views early intervention beginning with preschool as a successful component and feels that Head Start is essential. Children with Spanish as their first language develop basic English skills through that program. Brigita also sees the need to have a support program to follow students from preschool on.

Parent Involvement

She views parent involvement through the Parent Advisory Council, meetings, and home visits as important factors. She thinks that it is very helpful for a bilingual staff person to interpret report cards for the parents. She also thinks that it is beneficial to have a staff person take parents to parent/teacher conferences and make the experience a positive one for them. There needs to be follow-up at the homes to observe any changes that affect the students. Brigita feels that parents need to set a time and place in their homes for the children to study. Brigita and another liaison have the flexibility to make home visits in the evening.

Reaching Dropouts

Brigita feels that the positive components for dropout retrieval include a good system of identification and recruitment. In the HEP program, there is communication with the Migrant Dropout Reconnection Program and secondary migrant

advocates in Florida who identify dropouts and send information to Brigita so that she can contact them. She prefers making home visits in the three county area but also calls or writes the dropouts. She noted that she sees the "REAL TALK" newsletter in people's homes and feels that this is also a valuable method of reaching dropouts.

Recommendations for GED

Brigita pointed out several negative points that she would like to see changed. She noted that with some G.E.D. Programs, there is minimal group instruction and students are expected to work on their own and ask questions. Many students do not feel comfortable frequently asking the teacher for help when they do not understand the material. Thus a good G.E.D. program combines group instruction, individual instruction and time for the students to work on their own and ask questions as they come up. She also views a lack of transportation to non-residential G.E.D. programs as a detriment. If a program is outside the migrant population area, there should be transportation provided for those who would otherwise be unable to attend school.

High School Equivalency Program

Brigita feels that a residential setting on a college campus, as in the case of HEP, gives students a chance to meet college role models as well as an opportunity to live away from home for the first time. She feels that these opportunities help students make an easier transition to vocational programs or college. A negative factor has been that many students are in need of basic skills and are turned away from HEP because of that. Brigita would like to have more pre-G.E.D. classes for students with 4th-6th grade skills or pre-HEP residential programs to serve those students.

Comprehensive Coverage for All Students

For dropout prevention, comprehensiveness is essential. The ideal program Brigita envisions covers the needs of any student: ABE, pre-G.E.D., G.E.D., ESL, or learning disabilities. She feels that there should be more staff to work with the learning disabled students. Some students need such items as glasses and there needs to be communication between networks and alliances to fulfill those needs.

Dropout Retrieval Needs

In Brigita's ideal dropout retrieval program, there would be career counseling that helps students set realistic goals. She would also include a support system to make follow-ups. There should be child care services and parenting skills classes as well as G.E.D. classes for teens. A residential setting or a commuter program near students' home base and transportation are important in retrieval programs.

Prevention Strategies

Brigita mentioned several prevention strategies that have had successful outcomes. She cited the STAY Program in Collier County, Florida which pays migrant students as tutors/role models for younger ones. In Manatee County, Florida, there is an after-school secondary tutorial program that places teachers in camps, a church, and a community center in a farmworker housing project. Teachers are able to keep in contact with parents in those cases. Brigita would like to train and hire migrant farmworkers as tutors and role models. She would also like to see more career awareness and vocational training with a support system. If a stipend can be provided for students in the vocational program, more would be able to participate.

Community Involvement

Brigita mentioned that many migrant students do not have the opportunity to be involved in extracurricular activities. She would like to see community involvement for students through sports events, folk dancing, etc. Parents should also get involved and take pride in their children.

Summer Institute and HEP Success

The Summer Institute just completed its third summer program. During the first two years, there were sixty students at three Florida sites. This last year, there were ninety students at two sites. HEP has 20 or 30 students in each of its three ten-week sessions. Brigita feels that staff in both programs have been very dedicated. Students in HEP have been very motivated and enthusiastic which contributes to their success.

Brigita Barobs, HEP Recruiter
College of Education
Department of Special Education
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Tampa, FL 33620-8350

October 7, 1988

Interview with ANNE BARRY
Project STAY Director, Immokalee, Florida

Anne Barry worked as a volunteer for United Farmworkers in Michigan where she did fund-raising and tracked down migrant workers' last paychecks that they never received. When she moved to Florida six years ago, she worked at Redlands Christian Migrant Center. In this migrant child care center, she was the Resource Coordinator who trained staff. She also moved around the state to train staff and was centered in Immokalee. She heard of a one-year grant position at Immokalee High School, STAY (Strive to Achieve Yearly), which is now permanently funded.

The STAY Program

She set up a work program which gets non-profit jobs in the community for up to sixty students. It was necessary to transport students so there is a bus and a liaison. Since lack of money has been a major reason for dropping out, students in the STAY Program work two hours a day after school.

Dropout Retrieval

Anne and her staff make contacts with every migrant dropout telling them about alternatives and trying to get them to Vo-Tech or HEP (High School Equivalency Program). Seven hundred migrant students comprise 70% of the Immokalee High School population. Two hunded of those migrant students are at risk of dropping out according to a dropout characteristic list that contains 2 or more factors. Their grade point average is below 2.0. Anne views community involvement as a positive factor in dropout recovery. Anne counsels students and parents and makes many home visits. There are also afternoon and evening tutoring sessions available.

Summer Institute

The Migrant Summer Institute has been very successful for the 25 to 35 students who participate and graduate from it. Anne does all the paperwork for that project.

Research and Documentation

She also is busy with public relations work such as writing articles and giving local and national presentations. She believes it is vital to research and document everything, which is true to her background as a research sociologist. Anne has documented that in 1984-85, 68% of Immokalee dropouts were migrants. In 1986-87, and also in 1987-88, the rate had fallen to 33%. She also cited that of the 200 at-risk migrant students, only 4% graduated in 1984-85. 12% graduated in 1985-86; 16% graduated in 1986-87; and in 1987-88, 22% of the target group graduated. The G.P.A. increased one-tenth of a point per year from 1984-85 through 1986-87, going from 1.6 to 1.8. Immokalee High School has been told its MSRTS data is the most up-to-date and that the applications for Summer Institute are the most complete and accurate.

Successful Components

Anne feels that group counseling has been beneficial. Anne runs the STAY program, with the help of a paraprofessional bus driver/bilingual liaison. That person takes students to the hospital, clinics, etc. There are also two migrant program teachers and three aides. Two portables are set up to accommodate the program. Anne views the STAY Program as the most complete dropout prevention program that she knows of because of the job component. Every targeted student who graduated held a job in the program.

Anne feels that to keep students in school there needs to be everything in her program plus the cooperation of all staff. Documentation is important to show results in students' progress. The STAY Sr. Program which serves grades 9-12, takes successful tutors and has them work with the younger students in STAY Jr.'s grades 3-8.

Follow-Up

For dropouts, students who are thinking of dropping out, and graduates, there is a Vocational-Technical Center work evaluation program in a portable where assessment can be done in half a day or in forty hours. This program is funded by the James Lorenzo Walker Vocational-Technical Center which is part of the Vocational-Technical Department of Collier County. Students try out all the machines to determine their abilities. Follow-up includes telling the students potential places that can match their aptitudes. The evaluation results are sent to an employer. Anne also keeps going back to dropouts to inquire if they would like to go to a HEP program.

Tutoring

There have been problems in getting the tutoring on its way, but the program is growing. All students who had "Fs" were

told about the availability of having a tutor. Twenty students have been involved so far. Anne feels that word-of-mouth by other students has helped.

Encouraging Students to Stay in School

Anne noted two things that make her very sad. The first is when students turn sixteen and their parents force them to quit school for economic reasons. The other case is when students enter late and leave early they lose credits and have to repeat a grade. She feels that the Migrant Summer Institute's incentive pay of $450 and $15 a week maintenance pay encourages students to graduate. She also noted the tremendous cooperation between the school and the community. Anne's motto is "Let's move beyond excuses and get to the crux of the matter."

Anne Barry
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Immokalee, FL 33934

September 29, 1988

Interview with JUDY DELVECCHIO
G.R.A.S.P. Coordinator, East Bloomfield, New York

Judy has worked out of the East Bloomfield, New York Migrant Tutorial Program for the past five years. During that time, she has been running G.R.A.S.P. (Giving Rural Adults a Study Program) and also working on the A.O.P. (Adolescent Outreach Program).

The G.R.A.S.P. Program

G.R.A.S.P., a New York pilot project originating in Washington County in 1981, is a free home-study course serving rural, disadvantaged and isolated people who cannot attend G.E.D. classes. Students must be eighteen or older or out of school for one year to enroll in the program. After the initial contact or phone interview, students are given a TABE test (Test of Adult Basic Education) to determine their reading and math levels. If a student's abilities are very low, Judy connects the person with a Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) program. Since many students have had negative school experiences, Judy feels that the correspondence nature of the G.R.A.S.P. program is a plus. Presently there are about 225 students of all ages enrolled in the program. She sends lessons to each student and corrects the returned lessons. Students work at their own pace so time varies in program completion rates. Judy feels that this correspondence course is also an advantage for those with transportation problems in getting to a G.E.D. program. She notes though that students need to keep up inner motivation. G.E.D. testing is recommended at a 10th or 11th grade equivalency. The majority of students (95%) who work through the program and take their G.E.D., pass.

Individualized Modifications

Within the tutorial program, Judy sees the need for making individualized modifications for migrant Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students. She feels that her program at Bloomfield Central School is unique in doing that. The students are first placed in a regular homeroom, a reading/writing clinic, math class or clinic, ESL and Spanish classes. They are with a tutor at least once a day. She noted that LEP students with low reading comprehension have a particularly difficult time with social studies. She tutors them in that subject and also recommends a tutor for additional language instruction.

After a school semester and greater English proficiency, the students are placed in regular subject areas. The school tutor works very closely with the student and teacher supporting and modifying when necessary. Judy also mentioned that the Puerto Rican students in her program are given a Pass/Fail option instead of a grade which would discourage them after they have worked very hard and only got a 65. She also mentioned that she has the students take the Spanish Regents or competency in order to get three years of credit.

Home-School Communication

Judy's role as a visible tutor who knows all the students has been a real asset to the program's success. She also is the home-school communicator and feels that this is also a vital role. She notes that the communicator must take a strong advocacy role and have a positive relationship with parents and students. This takes many human hours but is the key to successful outcomes. Judy observed that one tutor for one building for one period isn't enough. She also recognizes a need for earlier outreach to grades 6-8.

Dropout Retrieval

To address migrant dropouts, Judy would make home visits after identifying students through the school records or Adolescent Outreach Program. She would offer them HEP, Job Corps, or other program opportunities to continue their education. Judy mentioned that many dropouts lack the self-confidence to leave home and also have financial problems. If there are no G.E.D. programs nearby, she said they can do G.R.A.S.P. The distance of HEP programs limits participation. She feels that having a HEP program in a two hour radius from home would encourage more participation. Many of the students she has worked with find JTPA too demeaning or too bureaucratic. There have been negative reactions to Job Corps, too, mostly because students didn't feel safe there.

Staff Cooperation

Judy noted that isolation and extreme poverty have been major factors contributing to student failure. She feels that some staff members are insensitive and need to be more aware of the home situation. There are inservices to prepare staff and make them more culturally aware of students' backgrounds. Judy also felt that the Principal, Mr. Stephen Beaulieu at Bloomfield, has been very accommodating in dealing with troubled students. Overall, Judy viewed very positive factors in her program.

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September 21, 1988

Interview with JUAN GARCÍA
HEP Director, El Rito, New Mexico

Juan grew up in northern New Mexico and has been a farmworker himself. From 1963-66, he was director of the centers of the Home Education Livelihood Program, which was part of the Department of Labor's Community Action Program during the Johnson era. The program provided farmworkers with home improvement skills and instruction toward the G.E.D. For half the day, women were offered sewing and cooking classes while men participated in carpentry programs. The remaining half day was spent in literacy instruction. In 1966, Juan finished his degree and did student teaching in 1967. In 1972, he helped write the original HEP proposal which focused on skills training first, then G.E.D. attainment. From 1974 to the present, he has been the Director of the High School Equivalency Program in El Rito, New Mexico.

Vocational Training/G.E.D.

When the El Rito HEP was funded under the Department of Labor, vocational training was the primary goal combined with G.E.D. Juan feels that this simultaneous process works well. He sees the very real need for people to learn a trade in order to get a good job. He noted that migrant workers enjoy working with their hands, so vocational skills training strengthens this interest. The G.E.D. has opened many doors for workers.

Juan mentioned the lack of sensitivity the nation shows in not providing a subsistence allotment during the training period to married students or ones with families. Without that money, a person cannot take care of the family and often drops out of an educational program.

Concerns

Juan expressed some frustration at not being able to serve students in HEP whose reading levels are very low. There needs to be more money to be able to serve the lower level students. There has been pressure to serve those with a minimum of a 6.2 reading level. This, he feels, is too numbers driven. A student's success in HEP depends on motivation and desire to do the homework. Good note-taking skills are also a necessity.

In the home, Juan would like to see more parental concern. He feels that parents should push and reward their children more in order to encourage them to stay in school.

Juan noted the difficulty students have in completing school due to mobility. This moving from school district to school district is damaging insofar as the students have been outsiders for too long and they can't identify. One possible solution Juan has heard of is a classroom on wheels in which a group of teachers accompanies a group of migrants to the new site. Juan noted that success within school districts is due to teachers and the districts themselves. Going a little extra step to help students makes all the difference. Districts that show the most sensitivity have the greatest success.

Teachers' Roles

A major success Juan has had with his program is that he has convinced teachers that they are counselors and advisors first and then teachers. He believes emphatically that teachers need to love, protect and care for their students. When students know they are cared for, they will perform.

In a one-on-one instructional approach, teachers can talk to the students about their problems and they should solve the problem immediately rather than making a referral. Since there is a lack of dollars to provide a subsistence allowance, many students do not have enough money for stylish clothes. Teachers should be sensitive to their students' feelings of inadequacy.

Juan feels that teachers are the best recruiters. If students love the program they will tell others. With a good teacher, a program doesn't need recruiters, Juan feels.

Juan wonders where the advocate is once a student is in a classroom. He suggests that a teacher become the student advocate. A teacher can talk to administrators and help the student's family obtain food stamps and other needed services. Juan feels that counselors are seen as disciplinarians.

Acclimation and Advocacy

Juan views an acclimation period as critical for success with HEP and G.E.D. He thinks that it takes at least sixty days of adjustment for a student to make it. A student advocate could help a migrant student adjust by walking him/her through the system. There needs to be follow-through, monitoring on a daily basis and immediate follow-up if the student is always late, absent, or having school problems. Advocates could be peer students who help other students survive the system and advise them.

Advocates are the supportive arm that students need in their fall-back plan. When vocational training was part of HEP, Juan was present and inquired why students were absent. He

feels that his presence as a caring person and as an advocate had a positive influence on completion rates.

Large schools could be a hindrance to success because the number of rules and buildings are overwhelming to a migrant student. Juan feels that the educational system needs to consider the culture and way of life which is linear, straight forward, and uses face-to-face encounters in problem-solving. Students are used to dealing with problems as they arise and are not inclined "to go around corners" to counselors.

Students need job-finding and job-holding skills. In a more urban setting, retired businessmen could be contacted to provide mock interviews.

Helping Students Aspire

One of Juan's messages for youth is, "Dream and dream big!" Parents, teachers, advisors, brothers and sisters need to show students a direction to aspire. Students need to see that they can be scientists, bankers, or doctors. They can't aspire if no one lets them. Students need a career plan so they can have something in mind and will study harder. Juan points out that if there are no aspirations, how can there be a commitment to an educational program? If a student feels that the learning environment is uncomfortable or unsafe, he/she will be driven out.

Recommendations

Juan mentioned the need for more funding. He feels that legislators should request financial aid for married students or those with families while they are in training programs. There has been a focus on the elementary and secondary levels but not on the post-secondary. It is important to take care of those over 21 so they can attend school. Juan recommends that the Department of Education provide vocational support with a training allowance.

Juan also would like to see a change in policy that at present says a person without a high school diploma or G.E.D. does not qualify for financial aid to an institution of higher learning.

There is a need for more staff sensitizing, Juan feels. He would like to find a way to "measure their hearts." Staff have to love the kids to work in the classroom. Since so many of the kids have suffered neglect, they need love, concern, and to know that they are part of this nation.

Staff should help students aspire to become. Some students want to be farmworkers and should be proud of it. Juan emphasizes that they still need an education to help their children and to protect themselves. He feels that education is

the only way to better oneself.

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March 14, 1989

Interview with SISTER JOAN HOOLAHAN
Program Supervisor, School-Based Youth Services Program
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Sr. Joan Hoolahan, presently working with 13-19 year olds at the Henry D. Young Vocational Center in Salem, New Jersey, has been in the migrant education field since she served with a summer program in 1975. From 1976 to 1987 she worked with the Delaware's State Migrant Program as Migrant Education Coordinator in the Capital School District in Dover.

The HEP Concept

Sr. Joan favors borrowing from the High School Equivalency Program (HEP) concept to form programs for migrant students in the large sending high schools. These programs would be like HEPs in their emphasis on counseling and small class size. Staff would understand that work is often a priority for migrant youth and would allow for the flexible scheduling working youth require. She suggests that when school staff realize that a large number of their Algebra I students, for example, will be migrating, the school arrange for P.A.S.S. program continuation of schooling for these students. The idea would be a HEP atmosphere at the homebase school, with P.A.S.S. program continuation on the road.

National Program with Year-Around, Clock-Around Scheduling

"It is going to be rare that someone goes from kindergarten to grade twelve in the same school system," says Sr. Joan. The United States population as a whole is becoming increasingly mobile. A more flexible system with national requirements for graduation would help not only migrant children but many Americans. Educational reform will need to deal with the needs of the population, not the needs of the staff. All agencies must be more flexible in adapting to needs of the youth. Sometimes "we write down what we do, and if the youth doesn't fit in, we can't do anything. It may have been our only chance to help him." Year-around, clock-around schools would help many. The migrant youth, in particular, often have severe pressures to support the family. The schooling must be available for that student when the student is free. The system sometimes fails to realize that the youth must work. The question should be asked, "How many hours a week are we going to be able to work with this person? If we insist on a 9:00 - 2:30

schedule, forget it. The youth must support the family. If you are going to break a cycle of poverty, you must create a system that fits in with where kids are, not where they should be."

Homebase Mentoring System

If finances were no problem, Sr. Joan envisions a system in which a migrant student's home school would stay in touch with the youth during the season. This would be a difficult proposition with the large numbers of migrant students some schools serve. Sr. Joan suggests that perhaps "at-risk" students might be targeted for a homebase contact system. To decrease the dropout rate, "someone is going to have to do something - mentoring may be it."

Funding to Age 21

Funding for migrant students to age 21 is critical to their graduation. Funding should be available if a youth is attending an educational agency.

Successful Programs: CAMP, MDRP

Sr. Joan noted the success of the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) in helping migrant youth with their first year of college. "The counseling is key," she said praising the sensitivity of CAMP counselors. "They know where migrant kids are coming from." The only problem Sr. Joan has found with CAMP is that funding limitations mean relatively few migrant youth can be served. She also mentioned the Migrant Dropout Reconnection Program as helpful in dropout retrieval nationwide, saying that its newsletter, REAL TALK, is very successful in giving dropout youth hope. She suggests that states with larger migrant populations could add local news to such a newsletter yielding an even better product.

Other Needs

Sr. Joan has noted an increase in the numbers of 12-year-olds called upon to stay home and look after children who are entitled to Migrant Head Start. The number of days children can attend Migrant Head Start has decreased recently, so that not only are the preschoolers missing the program because of lack of funding, but their older siblings are missing school as well. Increasing Migrant Head Start funding would, in her view, help prevent dropouts.

She also suggests the greater use of coalitions between schools and businesses might help ease financial problems. She noted that the Pennsylvania 143: Project C.A.R.E. began such work and could be followed up.

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Interview with ROBERT LEVY
ESCORT Director, Oneonta, New York

Robert Levy, presently Director of the Eastern Stream Center on Resources and Training (ESCORT) based at Oneonta, New York, has expertise on migrant secondary issues from his work as coordinator of several Section 143 projects: IMSSP (Interstate Migrant Secondary Services Program), MAP (Migrant Attrition Project), and the Grade Retention and Placement Evaluation project (GRAPE).

Cooling Off Period after Dropping Out

Bob believes that many youth are not ready for any sort of alternative education program at the time they drop out of school. For many high school has been an unpleasant experience, so they need to cool off. The time necessary is uncertain and would differ from one youth to another, perhaps as little as two weeks or as long as two years. Personnel intent on retrieval can waste a lot of time if they are insistent before the youth is ready and may slow down the process. Somehow, however, the door must be left open for the youth to re-enter an educational program when the youth is ready; contact should be maintained.

Bob Levy asks for a study of the lag time necessary before youth are signing up for such courses as G.E.D. preparation after dropping out of high school. How old are the people who are enrolled in these G.E.D. courses? Perhaps twenty classes in the country could be studied, for age of participants, the length of time since they left school. With such information educators might be better able to intervene.

New York's Model Plan for Retrieval

New York State drew up a model plan for retrieval, which is working well in some areas. The plan involves the use of the census takers, the staff who already know the migrant farmworkers, to go beyond the usual duties and search out the dropout youth. When dropouts are identified, an appointment is then made for some time within the next week for the census taker or an adolescent outreach worker to meet with the dropout. The youth is then referred as necessary to alternative forms of education.

Among the problems with the system is the fact that the dropout has often left his family and moved out on his own. The family may not know exactly where the youth is living, and he/she may no longer be migrant eligible. The census taker then may spend time looking for a youth who is non-income producing. A second problem, of course, is that the adolescent outreach worker and census worker may be too busy to get around to the work with dropouts. A Migrant Education problem all realize is that "we can't be everything to everybody."

Difficulties of Retrieval

Dropout retrieval, Bob finds, is fairly easy in a state such as New York which has a regional recruiting system and regional service delivery. The problem usually lies in a lack of staff time for the retrieval effort. Hiring a half time person for such work may be necessary. From his work on the 143 projects, Bob realizes that some states are having difficulty serving secondary migrant students, let alone dropouts. Some find that to stretch migrant dollars to the fullest, they must use their money for in-school youth rather than searching for the dropouts.

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October 25, 1988

Interview with FRANK LUDOVINA
Coordinator, Migrant Education Region IX
San Diego, California

Frank has been in Migrant Education for twenty years. He has served as Program Assistant, Coordinator, and Regional Director from the northernmost to the southernmost parts of California. Frank is presently a Coordinator of Migrant Education in Region IX of San Diego and Orange Counties.

As Director of Region II in Northern California, Frank served 12,000 migrant students.

He is known for his emphasis on high quality staff development and on concern for health and dental care for migrant students.

Frank developed the prototype of the Student and Program Needs Assessment (SAPNA). He also worked with staff to pilot secondary strategies such as work-study programs and the college-site programs Adelante and College Bound. Frank piloted the Secondary School Advisor role and the Migrant Services Aide role in California. He also introduced the issue of grade retention and its effect on migrant dropout rates. (In Florida a similar role is called the Secondary Advocate).

Family-Based Programs

For a program to be successful, Frank feels it must be family-based. He thinks it is a mistake to think of the child as an independent agent. This, he feels, is an American cultural phenomenon, different from the Third World culture of Mexican and other Hispanic migrants where the family unit dominates any individual options. Most migrant parents have little or no formal education. They support education, but they may not understand the expectations involved in schooling. Most migrant families do not realize, Frank noted, that one hour a day of homework can be the difference between success and failure. It is not because the parents don't care, but because they don't know.

To help remedy some of the problems, Region IX sends staff to the homes to talk to parents about American school systems. Staff meet in the home for one to two hours twice a year to give

parents information about their children's health needs, academic progress, and other school-related matters. The parents in turn provide information about their children that school staff may not know. This form of early intervention and elevating parents' aspirations for their children have been successful.

Frank views the traditional model of the migrant family as being an authoritarian family unit. Whatever the parents say is "law". If parents are convinced of a certain behavior or expectation, they'll teach it to their children. This strength of the family unit can work for migrant educators and the family. Through early intervention, we need to set up expectations for children to go to college so that they will see it as a real option. Many activities for parents and students on college campuses can reinforce the idea.

Secondary Student Advisors

Secondary students need an advisor, a role model, an advocate and a comadre/compadre figure, who is identified with the school and is on a first name basis with the family. Frank feels that this person should have social welfare expertise and act as liaison with community, parents and teachers. This person needs to be conversant with teacher/student/bureaucratic cultures as well as able to gain the support of migrant students and their families.

Work-Study Programs

One of the most successful components for secondary students is the work-study program in Frank's view. He thinks it should be seen as an educational program that provides career options rather than solely as filling a student's economic needs. He feels that the exposure to various types of work allows students to realize that they too can achieve a different life beyond migrant farmwork. He has seen students who have been regarded as troublemakers, potential dropouts, or drug users turn themselves around with the improved self concept and new responsibilities that a job brings. He notes that many former students come back with success stories that began with work-study experiences.

Another benefit of the work-study program is that it helps reduce racism in areas where communities have had little experience hiring minorities. The students perform their jobs very well and dispel old stereotypes.

Frank realizes that work-study programs are hard to implement but they are well worth the effort in turning around lives. He recommends cooperation between Migrant Education and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). Through this effort, students can receive academic and career instruction on college campuses in the morning and be transported to paying jobs in the

afternoon. Frank also mentioned the California Regular Occupational Program that is sponsored by schools, reimbursed like other educational programs, and offers job training.

Migrant Education Responsibilities

With the new legislation that requires identification and recruitment of migrants up to age 22, Frank says recruiters need to be trained in how to re-introduce dropouts to the educational system. They need a ready knowledge of referral information. Frank sees an inadvertent effect of the legislation as divorcing Migrant Education from the public school system since the latter has not thought of serving 19-21 year old dropouts.

Migrant Education has the responsibility to do something about the non-graduate. Frank feels that there are many students who go to school and don't drop out, but who don't graduate because they lack credits. Advisors or advocates need to monitor student progress, advocate for means for students to earn credits (i.e. P.A.S.S.) and help students complete the necessary requirements, so all students will be graduates.

Educational Partnerships and College Outreach

Frank wants to see a partnership between JTPA or any other agency that has work expertise, and schools. Students need to be in real work situations.

Colleges should be more open to working with all students. Frank would like to see more outreach from colleges to local school districts.

Staff Training and Counseling Needs

For teacher training, it is important to look at demographics. Traditionally, training has been geared toward teaching the white middle-class. With changes in demographics, teachers need new strategies and approaches for teaching multi-cultural and multi-lingual groups. Migrant Education should have a voice in this training. Migrant Education should work with universities to influence teacher training, and migrant staff (Resource Specialists) should be well trained as Staff Development trainers in teaching techniques that will benefit migrant students.

For direct services to migrant youth and their families, Frank mentioned counseling to deal with culture shock. There is a lot of trauma involved with exposure to new cultural values. Parents are afraid of losing their children and children don't understand why their parents are so oppressive. Frank sees the need for advocates to help ease the culture shock.

Recommendations

On the national perspective, Frank recommends making Migrant Education money truly supplementary. He feels that by providing services during the school day, we are supplanting local school districts' responsibilities.

Frank feels that pullout tutorials are counterproductive. He thinks it is better to use Migrant funds to tutor before or after school, during lunch, or on Saturdays instead of replacing the school's efforts during the day. For elementary students, pullout results in an interruption in the flow of learning which makes the learning process disjointed and distracting.

When we develop services entirely outside of the school day, we avoid a tendency to support the system, rather than the student with Migrant funds.

Frank concludes that effective migrant educators must feel a "sense of urgency" in attempting to meet the needs of migrant youth, and be committed to social justice for migrant families.

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March 21, 1989

Interview with GERARDO MARTÍNEZ
HEP Director, Bethesda, Maryland

Gerardo's educational background is in International Relations/Economic Development. He worked for the Center for Human Services in the National School Resource Network on Violence and Vandalism. Gerardo won a HEP (High School Equivalency Program) grant which started in Maryland and Delaware, expanded to Pennsylvania, and piloted in New Jersey two years ago. The Princess Anne, Maryland site where Gerardo is located was residential until it was defunded in September of 1987. It re-opened in May of 1988 but it is not residential now.

Recommendations for High School Equivalency Programs

There was peer pressure from other HEP directors to rely on Florida migrant students rather than tapping into the local migrant student population for HEP enrollment. There was a very high dropout rate due to the long distance from home. It was also very expensive administratively to run a small program. Student referrals were not always complete. Some students were very young and intimidated by college. Gerardo feels that students would be better served closer to home where they have family contact. He pointed out that it has been hard to reach students. Since state programs have to identify migrants, there have been better referrals. HEP maintains close contact with state agencies for referral and recruitment. Gerardo mentioned that he wants to experiment with an in-camp program instead of relying only on bringing students to a central location. He has found that reading levels were quite low and that students sometimes have problems adapting to a new setting where they are among peers, share cleaning responsibilities, etc. The University of Maryland Eastern Shore campus has traditionally had a high percentage of black students. The majority of migrant students in HEP are Hispanic and Gerardo said there was friction between the two groups. There are twelve week terms which serve sixteen students at a time. They tried to have a summer program which was very difficult to run because there were not enough activities during that time period to keep students interested.

Direct Services and Outreach

For direct services, Gerardo feels that job training is what students want and need. Many do not want to go on to

college. They need intense preparation and need to see a way out of their dismal economic situation. Some students expressed anxieties about not being able to succeed without the help of their families. Gerardo also felt that a hotline for migrant youth and the "REAL TALK" newsletter were excellent resources. He would like to see more of the students' own writing in the newsletter.

Suggestions for Dropout Retrieval

In the area of dropout retrieval, there should be a needs assessment to find out why students left. Since these students have been "branded" within the school for leaving, it would be better to provide alternative schools. These should be participatory in nature. Summer Institute and Upward Bound were examples that Gerardo recommended. Developing networks with dropout facilitators is a good concept that ties in the hotline with follow-up. It is also beneficial because it shows the students there are people who care about them and will motivate them.

HEP Services

There is a lot of community support for the Maryland HEP since that is the only program serving migrant youth. HEP teaches courses in Spanish but offers ESL classes as an incentive. Classes are taught in Spanish because it would be much harder to bring students' English level up to par.

Program Needs

Gerardo's ideal program would include transportation because that has been the biggest problem and it is expensive. He would like to see extracurricular activities such as baseball, theater, arts. It is important to raise community awareness of migrants' artwork. He would also integrate field trips in regular curriculum. Another idea Gerardo envisions is the pairing of migrant students with college students, retired people or volunteers. ESL services need to be provided, too. Another possibility for migrant programs that Gerardo cited is the exploration of agricultural careers since the students are knowledgeable about the land and crops.

Parent Involvement

Migrant parent involvement has not been good. The educational level of many parents does not allow them to give input in their children's education. Migrant programs need to address the problems that may exist due to the language barriers that widen the gap between children and their parents. Gerardo would like to have migrant teachers go to the homes and educate parents. Since many students drop out because of economic pressures at home and because some parents lack the experience to realize the value of education, the migrant program needs to

work with parents more closely. When parents read to their young children, they are demonstrating their abilities as positive role models. Gerardo mentioned that migrant programs give mixed messages by emphasizing the economic importance and value of the work migrants do. On the other hand, they try to bring migrants out of the stream and into better paying jobs and higher educational opportunities.

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37

Interview with CLEM MILLER
Project Director, Migrant Education Community Services
Redlands Christian Migrant Association, Ruskin, Florida

Clem's migrant education experience began in 1980 at the Redlands Christian Migrant Association in Ruskin, Florida. He worked on a ten-month research project to determine what to extent existing community resources applied to dropout prevention. The organization provided in-school migrant youth and dropouts a stipend for attending school. At the end of the project, it was found that the stipend wasn't incentive enough. The youth did not see any real relevance in school and felt that the money went to their parents anyway. In order for dropout prevention to be most effective, intervention must begin earlier. By the time students reach sixth grade, they have made a decision about the importance of school in their lives.

Early Intervention and Parent Support

Clem's program decided to focus on early intervention beginning with the early elementary grades seven years ago. He views this as the most successful component of his program. Efforts are now being made to pay more attention to secondary students. In reaching the older students, it is important to provide exposure to a world that is unknown to many migrants. It is also vital to have parental commitment to education. Without this, many students drop out. Students need the parental support to make the difficult transition to college.

Home-School Communication

Clem would like to see better home-school communication in Migrant Education. In his program, staff work closely with school districts to accomplish this. The program makes parents aware of educational services for their children, provides transportation and translation when necessary, and takes the time to work one-on-one with parents in explaining report cards. There are some outreach workers who make the home visits, but many staff members do double duty as liaisons. In a community-based program such as Redlands, home visits are very meaningful. Clem believes it is not always true that students drop out for economic reasons. Many parents in the Hillsborough County, Florida area have asked for help in keeping their children in school. Clem mentioned that some of the dropouts did not feel that education was meaningful. He has also found

that when families make a commitment to education, they make arrangements to arrive in time to get the children in school in September and stay late to allow them to finish. He has seen families delay their trip north in order to get their children in a summer program. To encourage this sort of parental commitment, Clem's program provides parent meetings, a video, former migrants as role models, and exposure to the other world.

Role Models and Counseling

Students need to see many more role models. There are now more high school graduates, but many of them return to the fields. Younger students react to this by not seeing the value of education. It is important to inform them of what kind of courses they need in order to pursue post-secondary education. Guidance counselors are too overloaded to provide adequate services for all migrant students. Clem would like to see the promising ninth graders targeted and worked with so that they will go on to college.

Following a Dream

Clem envisions an ideal program as providing children with dreams. He mentioned that many migrant students do not have dreams. He would like to see students challenged with the realities of American life and be successful through support from the program and caring staff. He would like to see professionals matched with individual students as in the Big Brother/Big Sister program. Clem parallels living life without a dream with going on a trip without a map. His idea of creating "dream factories" would allow students a chance to not only have a dream but to accomplish it.

Mainstreaming

As a recommendation for secondary programs, Clem feels that we need to provide services without adding to the stigma of making migrant students seem different from their peers. Pull-out tutoring and special trailers isolate them even further. Mainstreaming is critical to a migrant student's success.

Positive Self-Concept

Participation in extracurricular activities and a sense of belonging within the school make the high school experience positive. Clem said that it is necessary to find what students are good at and use that in developing a positive self-concept that will encourage students to go on with post-secondary education. He has coached a migrant soccer team and had successful results. The Goals for Youth program has potential benefits for migrant students.

Recommendations

Clem feels that across the country Migrant Education has been doing a good job. He said that the rationale may be lagging behind if we plan programs on realities that may no longer exist such as the assumption that economics is the main reason for dropping out. Clem cited that the longer immigrant groups are here, the more their values change and the more Americanized they become. He feels that we need to be more critical of ourselves when planning programs. It is important to think more seriously about earlier intervention with support and exposure to help students see college as an option. He mentioned that many migrant students who go to a community college need remediation. It may take four years to get a two-year degree. Clem realizes that not all students want to go on to college but they need options other than the fields to obtain success in supporting a family. Information on vocational schools, career awareness, counseling, and staff support are necessary to ensure that this happens.

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November 2, 1988

Interview with PERFECTO MUÑOZ
HEP Director, Stockton, California

Perfecto Muñoz, Director of the High School Equivalency (HEP) program at the San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton, California, has worked with the HEP program since 1984. His interest in migrant farmworkers, however, dates to the nineteen-fifties when his father worked with migrants.

Goals for HEP Students

HEP applicants at San Joaquin Delta College must score at the seventh grade level or higher to be admitted to the program. Applicants with lower skills are referred to a developmental educational skills program. The HEP program then remains in contact with the student so that the student can be admitted to the HEP program when prepared.

The HEP program teaches critical and analytical thinking skills. The intent is to go beyond the "I read it in a book" sort of thinking. A unique facet of the SJD HEP program assists in raising the expectations of its students, its location on a community college campus. All students take the SJD college assessment test and are encouraged to enroll in community college courses while pursuing their G.E.D. studies. Most do take one or two courses. A number of students have finished their HEP studies and gone directly into engineering schools at universities. "We point out all the options available," says Perfecto. The HEP program has a career information plan to show students what will be necessary to reach their goals. "If we can get them through the first year of college, we are successful."

Expansion of HEP Opportunities

The San Joaquin Delta HEP has expanded its campus and its time frame to be available to more students. Fifty students, aged 17 to 50, are now enrolled in evening classes at migrant centers. Another one hundred study on the main campus.

One difficulty the SJD HEP has always faced is student mobility. The students may not be able to attend classes long enough for success. If the staff know a student is moving, the student is referred to a HEP near the student's destination.

Whole Family Concept

Perfecto believes that one key to success in Migrant Education is the involvement of the whole family, not just the one student. It is important to go out to talk to the parents of the secondary students. It must be understood that all in the migrant family may need to work. Perfecto also believes strongly in the effectiveness of early intervention. Migrant Education should begin working with the parents of young children. The parents may well be too tired from their daily work to give the children all the stimulation they need for successful entry into school later. At the SJD HEP, staff began asking students, "What are you doing with your child while you are at school?" The answer was usually that a parent or friend was looking after the child. "So I thought," said Perfecto, "why can't we work with the children?" The SJD HEP now has a childcare component, which is planned to include cognitive skills training. "The children will have the skills that kindergarten teachers want. They will know color, shapes, the letters 'A' and 'B,' for instance." Single HEP mothers now have a 70% success rate; they are obtaining their G.E.D.s and continuing their educations. By third or fourth grade, he believes educators should do more with the migrant children, give them more experiences, positive ones so that by 12th grade they leave with diplomas.

Youth at Risk

Perfecto Muñoz has been concerned with the high dropout rate in the San Joaquin Valley. He estimates that the rate may be as high as 40 to 50% among Hispanics in the area. Migrant youth, of course, are particularly at risk because of their mobility. Tentative planning is underway for a center in Stockton to deal with youth at risk. The concept would be similar to that of the Clearing House at Clemson University. Perfecto envisions a working model, a place where educators from other areas could come to see a model program. The center would involve the University's School of Education's working with the local school districts in planning curriculum and teacher education. Teaching the textbook doesn't always work well. New ways need to be found to educate youth, to create a positive climate in the classroom. The center would be an opportunity to learn what really works and what does not.

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September 30, 1988

Interview with MERCED NATERA
Migrant Program Director and Counselor
Arvin, California

Merced is the Migrant Program Director and Counselor at Arvin High School in California. She has had this position since 1976. Most of Merced's experience has been in the San Joaquin Valley beginning with her position as a reading teacher from 1950-69, as a migrant home-school liaison at McFarland High School from 1971-73, and as a migrant reading teacher at the same school from 1972-74.

Successful Components

Merced views work-study positions as some of the most successful components of her school's migrant program. These positions target potential dropouts and provide meaningful employment. There are good community relations with the school that promote these job links. Merced feels that hiring migrant counselors also has been beneficial. She cites the P.A.S.S. program's impact on students' successful completion of high school credit. She does outreach through an evening class where she gets students enrolled in P.A.S.S. and counsels them. She feels that a limited number of tutors on staff is better. The staff is strictly bilingual.

Recommendations

She said that the churches have taken a very active role in a youth group that teaches folkloric dancing. She also mentioned the need for recreation among dropouts and the availability of the Bear Mountain Recreation District. Merced refers some of her ESL students to the Arvin-LaMont Adult School which serves dropouts aged 18 and above. There is also an independent study course for dropouts that allows them to earn credit through coming to class one day a week.

Merced makes a recommendation for an evening study course for dropouts. Recruitment is through word-of-mouth, school records, or families who contact each other. She says that the Parent Advisory Council is good but could be better. By the time students reach high school age, it is hard to get parents enthused. They need encouragement.

Need for More Health Education and Services

One of the ideas Merced has for an ideal dropout retrieval program is to combine it with health services. There are the federally funded Clinica Serra Vista and WIC programs that provide prenatal care, immunizations, and money for food for low-income women, infants and children. Merced recognizes a need for more health education.

Other Considerations

She also feels that since most students want to learn but often have parental pressure to work, there should be a work-study program. She would also like to see a "block parent" keeping an eye on students who skip. She feels that it is important for students to know that someone cares about them. She would like to see dropout retrieval programs team up with as many community agencies (except police) as possible. Merced mentioned a dream program that would include teaching by satellite which would appeal to people's interest in videos.

Community Involvement

Merced was able to fill 25 work-study slots in two weeks. She feels that businesses have been very receptive and teach good work habits. There are two communities involved.

Maintaining Student Contact

Merced and a support services aide make home visits. She is able to keep in touch with students through records as well as in her school's migrant center where students can come to study.

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Interview with ANNE STADLER
Coordinator and Director, Yuma Union H.S. District
Migrant Education Program
Yuma, Arizona

Anne has worked as a summer recreation director for six summers, as a migrant home-school liaison and translator for six years, and for the past eight years as coordinator and director of Yuma Union High School District, Migrant Education Program, Yuma, Arizona.

Successful Components

Anne views staff-parent workshops, extended day programs, P.A.S.S., migrant resource rooms, counselors, a dropout advisor, and a summer school liaison as the most successful components. A dropout advisor works for 16 weeks, 15 hours per week, mainly in the identification of dropouts. This advisor goes through school records to make the identifications and then makes visits to the dropouts. Anne sees the short duration of the position as a drawback. The summer school liaison and dropout advisor work for four weeks in dropout prevention, providing tuition assistance information and referrals, and making contacts with dropouts.

Overcoming Negative Factors

Yuma staff make interstate visitations on behalf of migrant students who are not allowed in some receiving states because of those states' claims of no room or no services. In some schools no migrant programs are wanted because of an unwillingness to admit the need of the students. Anne said that inservices were provided to overcome staff insensitivity. Principals sometimes do not back migrant programs. Anne also mentioned that insensitive administrators are chosen due to a lack of more appropriate candidates. School boards often make decisions out of fear and ignorance. She also pointed out the low self-esteem of many of the limited English-speaking students. Anne feels that liaisons are vital links in communication with the students. She also thinks parent effectiveness training is important.

Dropout Retrieval

Anne noted the Yuma District's dropout retrieval involves

sharing information, students, and cooperation among various agencies in order to best serve the dropout's needs. She feels that it is especially important for schools to become aware of those needs. The dropout advisor identifies and enrolls dropouts in tutoring, P.A.S.S. or extended day classes; counsels students and parents; and keeps communication open with the home and school.

Other Program Considerations

Anne views mental health as a primary concern. There is one bilingual psychologist to serve 5000-7000 students. There are ESL teachers but no English credit is given for ESL. Goals for Youth has been a successful program. Anne feels that there is a need for more academic options. She sees a need for a vocational school. Anne said that students are bussed long distances and do not feel connected to their schools. She views P.A.S.S. and Mini-P.A.S.S. programs as great assets for interstate migrant students.

Need for Better Record-Keeping

She is dismayed with the MSRTS tracking of many students who have no information recorded from the receiving state. Consequently, language testing is done on each student that enters the Yuma District. She would like to see enforcement of MSRTS record-keeping. As mentioned earlier, receiving states' schools have turned away Arizona migrant students which makes them four to five weeks short of gaining full credit in their courses. Arizona allows credit accrual for the fifteen weeks that the students have completed.

Recommendations

Anne feels that students need to become their own advocates, when insensitive staff are rude to them and turn them away. They should ask to see a supervisor. Certified home/school liaisons and migrant services aides have been effective in the schools. Anne would like to see more parent involvement as well as ESL programs for parents. She also feels that there needs to be more cooperation between elementary and secondary levels.

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September 27, 1988

NOTES

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